CENTER FOR STUDENT MEDIA

Student Fees Advisory Committee (SFAC)
One-Time Allocation Request FY 2014 & FY 2015

Mobile Application Pilot Project

As part of the Student Media Task Force recommendations introduced last year, mobile applications were identified as a new programmatic component that should be pursued in order to accomplish two things: 1) provide students with access to emerging media technology and concepts, and 2) tap into mobile audience demand and open up new sales opportunities.

Neither of these opportunities made available by simply participating with the SGA "Redline" app, which is not open to being used as an advertising platform. However, The Daily Cougar and potentially Coog Radio are involved in the "Phase 2" of Redline, and the CSM is supportive of these efforts.

However, the role of mobile in shaping the future of student media cannot be understated. National revenue projections in mobile advertising (shown below) are expected to triple in the next three years. Without a dedicated app for student media to use for selling advertising or bundling with current advertising programs, the department and its organizations stand to lose out on potential revenue over the next few years.

This request is intended to sustain a mobile application revenue project that the CSM would ideally launch in FY 14. With two years of development, user data and attempts to generate revenue, the CSM will have a better idea of what it will take to generate revenue in mobile. Ideally, these applications can be self-funded through generated revenue long-term.

Mobile Ad Revenue Grows in 2012
In Billions of Dollars
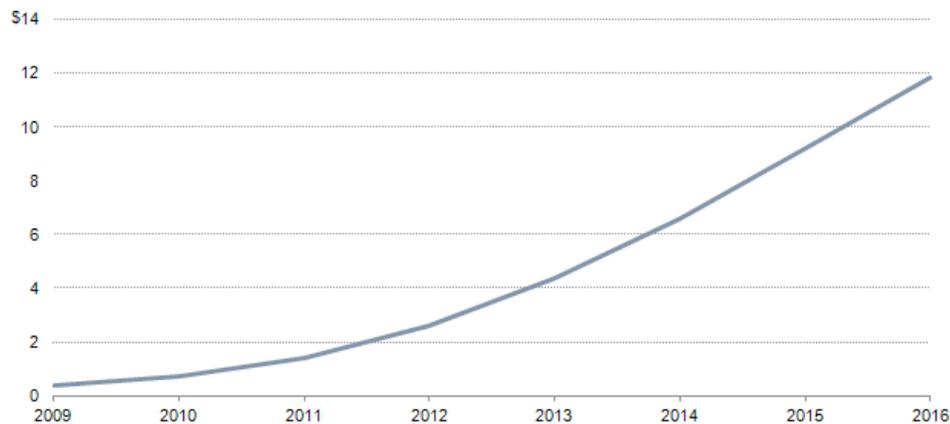
Source: eMarketer. "US Ad Spending Forecast." October 2012.
Note: Figures for 2013-2016 are forecasts.
PEW RESEARCH CENTER
2013 STATE OF THE NEWS MEDIA

The CSM has identified an application platform, Shoutem.com, that would allow a student designer and a content coordinator to produce a mobile application that could be featured in the Apple and Android app stores at a fraction of custom development costs. The app could utilize existing content or contain unique content, ranging from articles and photos, to interactive social networking, to photo sharing, to radio streams and video. Other features that would appeal to advertisers include interactive maps and listings,

sponsored home screens, and push notifications. These are exactly the kinds of tools the CSM needs access to in order to innovate and develop new revenue sources.

Other universities with student media apps are typically using them to showcase their student newspaper, radio station and television content. While that is a good feature to provide, the CSM believes that a more viable app program would target apps to specific populations and needs. The following has been identified as a potential application:

o **Gameday:** By pulling together Daily Cougar, SVN and Coog Radio sports content and by tapping into the fan base, the CSM could offer a sports-centered app that provides continuous information about UH Athletics. While UH already has a sports app provided through its own vendor partnerships, the CSM app would be unique in that it would provide an outlet for student-produce content exclusively. The app could feature play-by-play coverage of sporting events year-round, photos submitted by app users, "chatter" by fans inside the app, a schedule and map of athletics events, and more. As an example, here is UCLA's Bruin Football app, a model the CSM would follow.

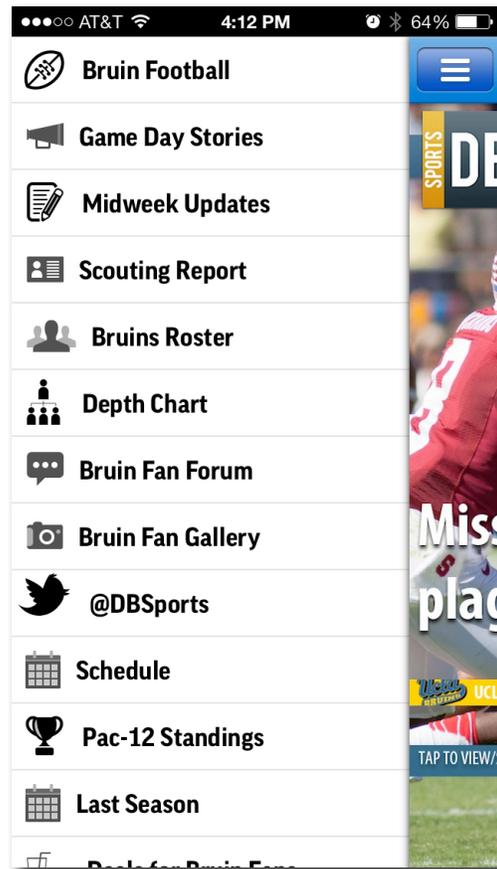**Fig. 1** Bruin Football app home screen   **Fig 2.** Bruin Football app menu

The plan would be to develop a prototype ahead of the 2014 school year. The following cost structure has been estimated.

Mobile production costs	FY 14	FY 15
Application build/management software – Shoutem – 1 app	$588.00	$588.00
Design / Production hours (60 hrs est.)	$600.00	$600.00
Content production (articles, data collection, etc.)	$650.00	$650.00
Marketing collateral/promotion	$1000.00	$1000.00
Announcement postcard to business/departments	$785.00	$785.00
Subtotal	**$3,623.00**	**$3,623.00**
Admin charge	**$217.38**	**$217.38**
Total per year	**$3,840.38**	**$3,840.38**

Outcomes/ROI

The app produced by CSM would be analyzed for potential in terms of audience growth and sponsorship. Long term, the CSM believes the mobile initiatives should be able to be self-funded through generated advertising sales or sponsors. However, this relatively small investment from SFAC will allow the CSM to enter a phase of innovation and experimentation.

To make an application that becomes a viable advertising vehicle, the CSM would seek to achieve 2,000 downloads of the application in the first year and 2,500 in the second year. However, the number of active users per month will be the biggest metric in determining advertiser interest.

In addition, the CSM would involve students as much as possible in the design and production of material that goes into the app, while CSM staff would be responsible for the technical maintenance of certain aspects of the app.